

VOLUME XII.

[JUNE.]

NUMBER 1.

THE

RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:

DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION,

AS SET FORTH IN THE

Formularies of the Westminster Divines,

AND OF THE

CHURCHES OF HOLLAND.

Thus saith the Lord; stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. Jer. vi. 16.

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ROYAL SOCIETY

OF LONDON

AND OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

AND OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

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AND WITNESSED FOR BY THE
ASSOCIATE SYNOD OF NORTH AMERICA.

Edited by a Minister of the Associate Presbyterian Church.

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ART. I. *The Love of the Holy Spirit, displayed in our Salvation.*

"When the Spirit is come, he shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."—*John* xvi. 13, 16.

Divine love, displayed in our salvation, is such a sublime, extensive, and delightful subject, that it can never be exhausted. To those in whose hearts it is shed abroad by the Holy Spirit, it is like ointment poured forth, whose savor is always sweet and pleasant. This love cannot be contemplated *all at once*—we must take it by *parts*. As we proceed in searching the scriptures, one field of love appears successively after another. In every one we may wander at large, with distinguished pleasure, and at last sit down with delicious wonder. How great is his goodness—how great is his beauty! All the persons in the Godhead, distinctly and jointly, display this love. We have contemplated the love of the Father, and of the Son, and now proceed to contemplate the love of the Holy Spirit, displayed in our salvation. His love is as important as that of the Father and the Son. He inspired the prophets, qualified the Saviour, concurred with him in all the branches of his wonderful undertaking, and applies to his people the great salvation: as Christ himself saith, "When the Spirit is come, he shall glorify *me*; for he shall take of *mine*, and shall shew it unto you." It does not mean that he shall confer any glory *upon* Christ; but he shall manifest, open out, and declare his glory, the glory of his person, as *Emmanuel*; of his character, as *Mediator*; and the fulness of his grace and salvation, as will appear when we get more fully into our subject. But, alas! it has been, and is at present, greatly corrupted.

The opposition to the whole doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit and his operations, has been managed by different persons in various ways.—Some confess his *personality*, but deny his *divinity*; others deny *both*. The ancient Arians confessed that he was a divine person, but affirmed that he was *produced* or *created* by the Father and the Son. Thus they denied his *Supreme Deity*. The Mahometans acknowledge his *personality*, but affirm that he is the highest of all *created* spirits, and that he is called the *Holy Spirit*, on account of the work to which he is appointed, i. e. to sanctify the church. This notion they learned from the Macedonian heretics.

The Quakers reject the whole doctrine concerning the personality, divinity, gracious and powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, and pretend to be enlightened and directed by a spirit *within* them, according to whose fruits they expect pardon and salvation; and thus they coincide with some of the *heathen*. "There is a sacred spirit residing within us, who is the *observer* and *guardian* of all our good and evil: according as he is treated by us, he will treat us."^{*}

The Jews, Socinians and Unitarians deny both the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, and affirm that he is an *attribute* of the divine nature, or the *influential power* of God.

That we may contemplate with knowledge and pleasure, *how* and *when* the Holy Spirit displays his love in our salvation, we must begin, by removing all that corrupt and filthy rubbish which the adversaries have thrown upon this delightful subject, as the Lord hath commanded us: "Cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." Therefore, let us search the scriptures, *dig deep*, as the original word signifies, but with *prudence* and *modesty*; that is, "not intruding into those things which we have not seen, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind;" yet, with accuracy, care and diligence, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." And, lastly, asking and depending on the Holy Spirit *himself*, to enable us to discern and gather what he hath revealed in his word, concerning himself, and the displays of his love in our salvation. He is the best interpreter of his own book. And here, we have the advantage of his adversaries; for it is not to be supposed that he will condescend to teach those who blaspheme the glory of his *nature*, by denying the *divinity* of his *person*.

All that we propose, is briefly to mention some of those *truths*, and the arguments by which they are supported, to make this subject plain and easy for our contemplation. "If men prevail in the opposition they make to the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, it is not worth our while to concern ourselves about his operations."

Having searched the scriptures in the *manner proposed*, we are happy to present the reader with the following important truths concerning the Holy Spirit and his operations. We have gathered that he is not a breath or a power, but a *person*—that he is a *distinct* person in the Godhead. He is neither the Father nor the Son. He is not a *created*, but a *divine person*. He is the *third person* in the order of subsistence in the divine nature. In his *natural* character, he proceeds from the Father and the Son. Though in his *official* character, he is *sent forth* by both, yet he applies himself to, and accomplishes his work, as a voluntary sovereign and supreme agent. Lastly, the work to which the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son, consists in the acts of his power and love, which he displays in our salvation. Reader, what do you think of all these particulars? Consider, and speak your mind. But, "that your faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God," let us prove distinctly, that we have *gathered them all* from the holy scriptures. *They* declare plainly,

1. That the Holy Spirit is not a breath, a power, but a *person*. Indeed, the original word, both in the Hebrew and Greek, is used in a great variety of significations, in the scripture: such as the wind, our rational souls, our breath, angels good and bad, and several other particulars, not necessary to be mentioned; because, in the places where it is thus used, the signification can easily be known from the connection. The word is also used to express the divine nature, or essence. "God is a spirit;" i. e. he is of a pure, spiritual, immaterial nature, not confined to any place.

^{*} Seneca, Epist. 41.

He is distinguished from every other spirit, as he is the Father (Creator) of them all. But there exists in the divine nature, *one* who in a particular manner is distinguished by the name *Spirit*. When the apostle saith, "There is one God, even the Father, and one Lord," (i. e. Jesus Christ,) he adds, "There is one Spirit." And, in another place, "One and the self-same Spirit." He is called the "Spirit of the Lord," (Jehovah,) and the "Spirit of God," i. e. the *Father*, as he partakes of his essence, and proceeds from him. He is "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father." He is also called "the Spirit of the Son," because he proceeds from him also. And, by way of eminence, the *Holy Spirit*. Let us now prove that he is a *person*.

(1.) This is evident, because *personal properties* are ascribed to him. An *understanding*, and the effects of it: "The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." A *will*: "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every one as *he will*." "What can be spoken more fully and plainly to describe an intelligent person, acting voluntarily, with freedom and choice, I know not."* *Power* is also ascribed to the Holy Ghost. As to the works of nature, "He garnished the heavens:" "He established the earth by his power." And also, in the works of grace. He formed the human nature of Christ. Thus said the angel to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the *power* of the Highest shall overshadow thee." This does not mean that he is the *influential power* of God; but only in answer to Mary's inquiry, "How can this be, seeing I know not a man?" Saith the angel, the Holy Ghost, exerting the power of the Most High, or the infinite power of God, shall accomplish it."

(2.) That the Holy Ghost is a *person*, is plain enough, because those acts which are characteristic of a person are performed by him—such as teaching: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall *teach* you all things." *Leading*—"As many as are *led* by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God." *Witnessing*—"The Spirit *himself* beareth *witness* with our Spirit that we are the sons of God." *Sanctifying*—"Ye are *sanctified* by the Spirit of our God." *Comforting*—"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another *comforter*, even the Spirit of truth." Once more, "When the Spirit is come, *he* will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." "*He* shall glorify me," saith Christ, "for *he* shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." Therefore, he is not a breath, a power, but a *person*. In fine, to this truth we shall add two testimonies, to which, one would think, all the sophistry of men would not dare to reply. One, you find, Acts, xiii. 2—4: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, *Separate unto me*,"—as it should be read, "Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them." Thus the Holy Ghost plainly declares that he is the *person, unto whom*, and whose work, Barnabas and Saul were called by himself. To say that "these words are ascribed to the Holy Ghost because the prophets that were in the church at Antioch spake therein, by his inspiration," is of no force against our argument; for we do not merely argue from his being said to *speak*, but from what is *spoken by him*. "Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul to the work which I have called them." And this is confessedly the Holy Ghost. Correspondent to this is that other text, Acts xx. 28. It is expressly said, that "the Holy Ghost *made* the elders of the church the overseers of it."†

We have expressed the preceding particulars as fully and concisely as we could, to guard the unlearned and unwary reader from being deceiv-

* Dr. Owen.

† Dr. Owen on the Spirit, Book I, chap. iii. sect. 26.

ed. If we lose the *personality* of the Holy Ghost, we may shut our Bibles as soon as we have opened them; for it is in vain to think of contemplating any displays of his love in our salvation, if we deny him to be a *person*. This is the foundation of all; and the truth of it will still more fully appear, in the illustration of all the following particulars—for we observe,

2. That the Holy Ghost is a *distinct person* in the Godhead. We have as many arguments to prove that he is a distinct person, as we have to prove that the Father and the Son are so. 1. We read of *properties* peculiar to each person. As it is the personal property of the Father to *beget* the Son, and the personal property of the Son to be *begotten* of the Father, so it is the personal property of the Holy Ghost to *proceed* from the Father and the Son. 2. We read of *distinct internal acts*, in which one person is the object of another's acts. Thus, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father but the Son." There is also a mutual knowledge and love, as to the Holy Ghost. "And he searcheth the deep things of God." In these mutual actings of knowledge and love, the blessedness of the holy God principally consists. 3. We also read of *distinct external acts* and operations, as to the several persons in the Godhead. Thus, the Father gave the Son to be the propitiation for our sins. The Son *himself made* the propitiation, and the Spirit enables us to improve it, by faith, for pardon and salvation. Lastly, the Holy Ghost is not the Father, but *sent* by him. He is not the Son, but *another Comforter*. We know Christ no more after the flesh, but here is one who shall abide with us forever. 4. When the doctrine of the Trinity is mentioned in scripture, the Holy Spirit is always mentioned as a distinct person. We are told what Christ says, in view of his incarnation: "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me." Does not the very sound of the words lead us into some *distinction* between the *Lord* and his *Spirit*, as if there was a concurrence of two *agents*?—Was it ever said that a man and his spirit gave out a commission!—that a king and his soul published a decree? The Spirit was present, as a *distinct person* at Christ's baptism. He descended in a bodily shape upon him, and performed an action peculiar to himself, as Christ himself saith. "The *Spirit* of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel." Thus, we are baptised "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the *Holy Ghost*." All these three persons are mentioned distinctly in that short account, that "Christ, being raised by the right hand of God, hath received of the *Father* the promise of the *Holy Ghost*." We proceed to observe,

3. That the Holy Spirit is a *divine person*, equally with the Father and the Son. 1. All the *names* expressive of Deity are, in their original glory, ascribed to him. He is expressly called *God*. Peter said to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." He is called *Lord*, the Spirit. If it had been in the Old Testament language, it would have been *Jehovah*. Moses, when speaking of the people in the wilderness, saith the Lord (Jehovah) did lead them. And yet Isaiah, speaking of the same people, at the same time, saith, "The Spirit of the Lord did lead them." Therefore, the Spirit of the Lord is Jehovah. 2. All the divine attributes are ascribed to the Holy Ghost; such as *eternity*—He is called "the eternal Spirit." *Omniscience*—"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." *Omnipresence*—"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" *Omnipotence*—"He is the Spirit of counsel and of *might*." As he is the *author* of faith, so the work of faith is with *power*—nay, "the exceeding greatness of pow-

er." 3. All divine works are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. He is the Creator of the universe. "He moved upon the face of the waters, garnished the heavens, and established the earth by his power;" was one in the great council. "Let us make man." For Elihu saith, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

There was an old foolish piece of philosophy, called *anima mundi*, the soul of the world; of which they who wrote against it, and they who wrote for it, could make nothing. But it seems as if they would ascribe no *personality* to the Creator of all things. We, in opposition to them, say that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost made the creation. The Holy Ghost has the sway of providence: he reneweth the face of the earth. He is also the *author* of the *new creation*. He inspired the prophets, qualified the apostles, formed and purified the human nature of Christ.—Believers are born of the Spirit. He sanctifieth and sealeth them to the day of redemption. 4. Divine worship is ascribed to the Holy Ghost. Baptism is administered in his name, equally with the Father and the Son. He also, with them is the object of prayer. Saith the apostle, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Nay, he is sometimes addressed *personally, alone*. "Come from the four winds, O *breath*, and breathe upon the slain, that they may live." (Ezek. xxxvii. 9.)

Thus, reader, you see what plentiful evidence we gathered from "the scriptures of truth," that the Holy Ghost is not a *breath*, an *attribute*, or the *influential power of God*. Nay, not a *created Spirit*, but a *divine person*. And, as it is all given out by himself, we may firmly believe that it is neither false nor imperfect. But examine and judge for yourself, in this age of error and blasphemy. "Search the scriptures daily, whether these things are so."

4. The Holy Spirit is the *third person* in the order of subsistence in the divine nature. So it is expressed in the form that is given for our *manner* of worship. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This does not imply any *inferiority* in the Son and the Holy Ghost to the Father, but rather, plainly, an *equality*. Indeed, some affirm that it is the personal glory of the Father to be the first person in the Trinity, in the order of subsistence. But these writers are extremely mistaken; for, first, though the Son, as Emmanuel and Mediator, has a distinct *personal* glory, "God raised him from the dead, and gave him glory;" yet there is no *separate* personal glory in the persons, as existing in the Godhead, as our divines teach in their excellent Catechism. "The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are the same in substance, *equal* in power and *glory*."

Secondly, to be the first person in the order of subsistence, is the *property*, the *peculiar* of the Father, but glory is the *attribute* of a nature which is common to all the persons in the Godhead.

Thirdly, it cannot be the glory of the Father to be the first person, as to *time*; for as the Father never existed without the Son, so the Son is called the everlasting Father. It is not the name of a *person*, but the attribute of a *nature*. And, as the Father and the Son never existed without the Spirit, so he is called "the eternal Spirit."

Again: it cannot be the personal glory of the Father to be the first person, as to *dignity*; for as we read of the Father of glory, so the Son is called the Lord of glory, and the Spirit, the Spirit of glory. In fine, to affirm that it is the personal glory of the Father, that he is first person in the Trinity, is a slide towards the Arian blasphemy. "These people declare that the Father created the Son, and that the Father and

the Son created the Spirit." Some affirm that "it is the personal glory of the Father that he is simply of none, being the first in the order of having life. In this sense, he is called the fountain of the Deity." But "in the beginning (i. e. from eternity) was the word," and *then* "in him was life." "He is that *eternal life* which was with the Father." Saith Bradbury, "It is dangerous to say that the Father is of none, and the Son is not. The phrase, 'the fountain of the Deity,' is not worth keeping, and ought to be laid aside. We have no warrant for it in scripture. God is said to be the 'fountain of life,' and the 'fountain of the water of life,' but to talk of divinity being *derived* by one, and *springing* from another, is a jar upon the proper idea we ought to have of divinity." But, when we say that the Holy Ghost is the third person in the Trinity in the order of subsistence, we mean that it is his peculiar property *alone*. For we observe,

5. That in his natural and personal character, he *proceedeth* from the Father and the Son. Thus saith the Son himself: "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." And, being the Spirit of the Son, he proceedeth from him also. This expresseth his relation to both persons. He is *of them*, by an eternal *emanation* or *procession*. The *manner* hereof cannot be comprehended by us. "The Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, himself never began, because his procession is continued, and is from him who never began."*

Here observe, "that this procession or emanation does not include any *separation* of the divine nature, but only expresseth a distinction of subsistence, by a property peculiar to the Holy Ghost."† Though the persons in the Godhead be distinct, the nature is *one*. Thus baptism is administered not into the *names* of three, which might have led us to suppose a distinction of *nature*, but into the *NAME*, as only of one. And yet the form itself tells us of no less than *three*. The ordinance reveals all under one name, and that is no less than the Most High God. To suppose that baptism is administered into a *breath*, an *attribute*, or even into the *name* of a *creature*, is a visible and daring insult upon the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt have no other God before me."

"The Spirit is neither said to be unbegotten, nor begotten; lest if he were said to be unbegotten, two Fathers would be understood as existing in the Trinity: if he were said to be begotten, as the Son, two Sons would be viewed as existing in the Trinity. But that our faith concerning the Father and the Son may be safe, he is only said to *proceed*. But he does not proceed into the Son, and from the Son, to sanctify a creature, as some vainly imagine, but he proceeds from both; because, as the Father begat a Son, as from himself, so the Holy Ghost is said to proceed from him also."‡ But we must leave this subject under a veil of incomprehensibility, believing, admiring, and adoring "what the Spirit himself saith (concerning it) to the churches."

6. Though the Spirit, in his official character, is *sent forth* by the Father and the Son, yet he proceeds, applies himself to, and accomplisheth his work, as a voluntary and sovereign agent. This brings us full upon the blasphemy of the Socinians and Unitarians, who affirm that the Holy Spirit is the influential power of God; and also upon the notion of one who, although he differs from these heretics, in granting that the Holy Ghost is the third person in the Trinity, yet he agrees with them in pulling him down from being a *supreme*, to be only a *subordinate* agent.—Saith he, "We read of the Father and the Son breathing, expressive of

* Ambrose. † Dr. Owen. ‡ Augustine.

their performing certain works, by the *agency* of the Spirit. The very reverse of this will appear, by comparing the mission of the Spirit, by the Father and the Son, and the *compliance* of the Spirit himself, to accomplish his work, as expressed in the scriptures.

1. God is said to *give* the Spirit. Saith Christ, "Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Thus, believers are said to *receive* him: "We have received the Spirit which is of God." Correspondent to this giving and receiving, the Spirit is said to *proceed*. Saith Christ, "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Had it been only said that he was *given*, we could not have known that there was any thing of his own *will* in what he did. But, as he proceedeth of his own accord unto his work, his own will and commission is plainly declared. "He divideth to every one as he *will*."

2. God is said to *send* the Spirit. "The Father will send the Holy Ghost in my name." This is also spoken of the Son himself. "I will send unto you the Comforter from the Father." This does not imply any local motion, but only has respect to the special work he is to accomplish in and for a person, such as in the conviction and conversion of sinners. Saith Christ, "I will *send* him unto you, and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin," &c. Nay, the Holy Ghost may be in persons in one respect, and yet *sent* to them in another. Christ promised to send the Holy Ghost to his disciples, as a *Comforter*, whom they had received before, as a *Sanctifier*. Saith he, "I will send him unto you, and ye know him, for he dwelleth in you." Correspondent to this, he is said to *come*: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come."—Again, "When the Comforter is come." So he is said to *come* upon persons: "The Spirit came upon Amasai." (1 Chron. xii. 18.) "The Spirit clothed Amasai, possessed his mind, as a man's clothes cleave unto him." So again, "The Holy Ghost came on them, and they prophesied." (Acts xix. 6.)

3. God is said to *minister* the Spirit. Gal. iii. 5, "He that ministereth the Spirit unto you;" that is, he that gives you continual or abundant supplies of the Spirit; as the apostle saith, "I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayers, and the additional supply of the Spirit." Agreeably to this, the Spirit is said to *fall* upon men: "The Spirit fell on all them that heard the word."

4. God is said to *put* his Spirit in or upon men. "I have put my Holy Spirit upon him." The word signifies his *actual bestowing*. He doth not send him, and leave it to their will and power whether they will receive him or no; but he puts him *in* or *upon* them, as they shall be actually made partakers of him, for the end to which he is designed. Being come, he is said to *rest*: "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him;" that is, abide and remain upon him, (i. e. Christ.) Thus, at his baptism, "the Spirit abode upon him." Saith the apostle, "The Spirit of glory and of God (the glorious Spirit of God,) *resteth* upon you." Where he rests, he abides. "He shall abide with you forever."

5. God is said to *pour* him out. "I will pour out my Spirit unto you." Again, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed," &c. Correspondent to all these particulars, he is sometimes said to *depart*. So he departed from Saul, and gave him no more qualifications for the civil government. So he departs from some who have been under convictions, and made a profession of religion, but complying with the temptations of Satan, and fulfilling their own lusts, he leaves them to perish eternally. David prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." But, as to the saints, though he may withhold the manifestations of his love, and the communications of his grace, in some *degree*, and for a *time*, yet he will not totally and

finally depart from them. "The Spirit that is given to them shall be in them a well of water, springing up to eternal life."

Thus we have proved, from the scriptures of truth, against all gain-saying, that though the Holy Spirit, in his official character, is sent forth by the Father and the Son, yet he applies himself to, and accomplisheth his work as a voluntary and sovereign agent, "dividing to every one as HE WILL." And as we could not do it in a more plain and concise manner, we have borrowed the preceding particulars from that steady and uniform writer, Dr. Owen, who was rooted and established in the faith, "as he had been taught," and abounded in it.*

Reader, this is the true grace of God in which you stand; therefore, be not moved away from this fundamental doctrine of the gospel. We observe,

6. Lastly, that the work to which the Father and the Son send the Spirit, consists in acts of his power and love, which he voluntarily displays in our salvation. Though this contemplation is limited principally to the *love* of the Spirit, yet this power cannot be excluded, but is always included. And by every act of his power, he displays the greatness of his love, both with regard to the person and work of Christ himself, and the application of the great salvation to his people, as will fully appear from the next branch of our subject.

[To be continued.]

ART. II. Cause of Apostacy.

[Continued from Vol. XI.]

Others are continuing in a sound profession, and in some thoughts about the Lord's way, under the force of custom. We are sometimes attached to a thing, because we have been long accustomed to do it, and it has become easy to us; and this is more likely to be the case, if it has been our fathers' custom before us, and we have seen nothing different from our earliest recollections. There is something of antiquity about it, which strengthens our attachment.

It is to be feared that there are many who have nothing stronger or better binding them to a sound profession. This brings up at the stated time a sufficient quantity of apparently serious thoughts to satisfy their conscience, and carry them through the form of Christianity, and make them appear to be as good and religious as their fathers before them—and this is enough. There are some of God's real children to whom much more than a sound form is not given, though truly desired and sought by them; but these here have no wish or concern about any more—they are content. Neither the events of Providence, nor their own varying necessities, make any difference to them; their thoughts and expressions are fixed as the stars in the heavens. All their religious feelings and all their exercises are for set times, and they feel no need or desire for them till the time come again.

Others continue their profession, and have their thoughts and meditations on the subject, chiefly by the influence of society and of connections. They have no affection, love or desire to the peculiar doctrines of their profession, for its own sake. They pretend not to any great delight in ordinances or private duties; but conscience would not be satisfied

* Dr. Owen on the Spirit, Book 1, chap 51.

without paying some attention to religion. They have no very particular fault to such a profession; and it is the profession of the place where their lot is cast, or of the family in which they have been brought up, or of that one in which they have formed their connections, or of that community on whose custom and patronage their success in business depends. And without making this profession, and some endeavors at religious exercises, they would not have so much esteem, happiness or success as they desire, nor would it be in any respects so convenient for them. Therefore, they continue to make the profession, and to muster up some trite thoughts and expressions to answer for their occasions to appear friendly to the doctrines of the Reformation. But so soon as the force of these things is withdrawn, or shall be exhausted, they can without difficulty or remorse drop the whole matter.

May not this explain the reason why numbers that professed Secession principles all their days, in Scotland, and for aught that could be seen about them were as zealous as their neighbors, so soon as they enter this free country, feel themselves liberated at once from all that characterized them as members of the Secession?—why others, upon moving into a new neighborhood, feel no difficulty in falling in with a new profession? and why some, when they are only for a few days from home, on some business, can try, with little or no compunction, to play their part at any thing, if so be only they think there is no one present that *knows* them.

There are others held to Reformation principles by the intellectual pleasure which they derive from contemplating the beauty of its abstract truths. They consider it pretty much in the same light that philosophers do a very beautiful theory, or as a mathematician does a fine demonstration in Euclid. They can speak well upon the subject, and seem to have satisfaction in doing it. Some of these may write, and perhaps preach Reformation doctrine to good purpose; and they may, if nothing come to drive them away, continue doing so all their days. But the heart does not *obey* the truth: it pursues its own course in an independent manner; and this explains their otherwise unintelligible conduct. When they speak on religious subjects, they seem to be really interested; but when they act in their occasions of life, you cannot think that their conscience feels any force of the truth at all. And when the interests of their profession draws against the interests in which their hearts are engaged—their money, their business, or whatever else it is—they are found standing by the latter, and the former is left to shift for itself. For serious, godly conversation, and for the practical part of personal religion, and the duties of brotherly love, sympathy, compassion, they seem to have no taste at all. All these things seem very surprising to those who do not advert to the ground of their attachment to religion—mere intellectual pleasure.

And it is much to be feared that another very numerous portion of professors are held to it merely by the spirit of opposition and the desire of victory. They will argue their points with zeal, and strenuously contend for every thing in the compass of their public profession. But when those exercises of religion that are far more congenial to the new creature are called for, they are perfectly inactive. That is not their element. For plain, direct acts of christian fellowship, they have no taste. But let these same things become matters in controversy, and presently they are all on fire again.

Second. When the heart ceases to keep the Lord's way, as above described, *exertion in its behalf will be greatly diminished*. This will hold as a universal truth, with regard to any subject. If it is a system of truth, or if it is only some temporal interest, or some calling, as sure as

the affections and desires and delight of the heart in it decline, so sure will the thoughts and meditations on it be less frequent, and exertion in its behalf less vigorous and effective. Perhaps I cannot refer to any fact that will bring this general truth more readily and clearly before the mind of all readers, than to the experience of high politicians. So long as the electors consider the success of their party, or (but I need scarcely now use the phrase) their country's good identified with their candidate, their thoughts, like an overwhelming torrent, would bear him over every obstacle to his official elevation, and their exertions in his behalf are untiring, and almost unlimited. But so soon as he is separated from the interest of the party, all the busy thoughts and untiring efforts in this same man's behalf, are suspended. He who but yesterday was every where met by cheering salutations, to-day finds every one cold, stiff and formal—dry civility and polite evasions.

It is now easy to understand how we will treat the *way in which the Lord leads*, when it is no longer "in the midst of our hearts." Our prayers will be less earnest and frequent in its behalf. We will be less watchful against the dereliction of truth and duty, or the entrance of innovations and corruptions, by ourselves or others. We will not go so far, or labor so hard for it. We will not spend so much time upon it.—We will not give so much of our money to its support. We will search out excuses for our delinquencies, and affect to be injuriously treated when they are not sustained. We will be more ready to catch at the real or apparent delinquencies of others, and more hotly pursue them.—We will be much less troubled about the interests which future generations have in it. Is not this what we are every where witnessing, and that, too, every year increasing?

Some generations ago, there were many individuals and families who fasted frequently on account of the affairs of the church, or any heavy affliction sent on the congregation or on the family. Private meetings for prayer and spiritual conversation were a very common thing in most congregations. Heads of families and schoolmasters painfully labored to instruct the children in the truths of the Reformation. Poor laboring people frequently contributed liberally out of their hard earned pittance to the support of the public cause of truth. They travelled great distances on foot to enjoy sealing ordinances, and the preaching of gifted ministers; and would be cheerful and content with any accommodations they could obtain, and they frequently passed their nights in the fields, when there was no place for them, or when there were so many strangers that they could not all be accommodated. They did not grudge three or four days lost upon a sacramental solemnity. They were frequently exposed to bad weather, yet they thought it no sufficient excuse to stay at home. They labored hard, lived sparingly, dressed plainly, and denied themselves every superfluity, that they might be enabled to do these things. But now the general course of conduct is surely greatly changed. Are not family and personal fasts and private meetings for prayer and conference extremely rare? Religious instructions, especially in the *way the Lord has led*, are banished from the day schools, and almost from the family. A few drowsy, languid efforts are made to have the Shorter Catechism committed, and a Psalm or two, and the important work is done with thousands of parents.

Now we must all dress and live as others do, and appear like the world, if we should go in debt for it, and therefore the interests of the Secession cause may call and beseech us, by all their scriptural excellency, and all their pressing necessity, as loudly and pathetically as they please, we have not at any time but little, and oftener nothing at all to spare to them.

We cannot go over a mile or two to meeting on foot. We cannot be exposed to the weather *for sake of going to hear a sermon*, or to attend a sacramental occasion. We grudge to spend so many days. We must have a fine church, crimsoned, cushioned and carpeted; we must have correct singing, or going to church would have no relish to our sons and daughters.

But again; when the necessary comforts and conveniences at a place of worship are *really wanting*, there is not enough of spirit for the public cause to procure them. We have neither money to spare for your Monitors and old standard books, Testimonies, Confessions, &c., nor have we time to read them.

Is not this the state of matters very generally? And, after all the pains taken to excuse the matter to the conscience, and persuade fellow men that our plea of exemption is honest, the only cause sufficient to account for all this lack of energy, this frigid indifference, is the *want of heart*. "I said this people errs in heart." Where professors are as truly interested, and find all their spiritual joys and delights as much identified with the cause of God, as men find their temporal prosperity with diligence in their business, their efforts in support of it *will be similar*.—Not more certainly does the shadow follow the body, than energy and activity in support of an object will answer to the measure of love and affection to that object. If the Reformation principles be in the *midst of the heart*, the *widow* will give to their support her "two mites," even all her living; but if not there, the *rich* will put them off with being exceedingly sorrowful that they *cannot* give any thing.

But it is needless to dwell on that which is every where seen and felt.

Third. When the heart ceases to be delighted with the Lord's way, the *knowledge* of it will decline. This is a necessary consequence. That subject in which we feel little interest, and on which our thoughts scarcely ever turn—in behalf of which we do not feel disposed to do much, must soon slip out of our particular knowledge. When men are dead or long absent, they seldom come into our mind, and we forget their manner of life, personal appearance, countenance, voice, and every thing about them. If we go to live in a foreign country, we will forget the language in which we were born. So it must be in regard to the subject of which I am speaking, when our esteem for it is gone. When parents feel little interest in it themselves, they will be at little pains to instruct their children in it, and they, in turn, with diminished interest in it, will be at less pains to teach it to *their sons*; and in process of time we may expect a race to arise that know and care nothing at all about it. And I appeal to all who have turned their attention to these things, if such a race be not *now* upon the earth, and in the bosom of churches called Reformed! even the very soundest and clearest on doctrinal truth! In the same congregation, you may find individuals in all the several measures of knowledge and of interest that have marked the retrograde course of the churches since the purest and best days of the Reformation.—Some few are still to be found (long may they continue,) possessing clear views of the doctrines, distinct and extensive historical knowledge of the way and manner in which, and the persons by whom the Reformation itself was brought about, and likewise of the wretched state of bondage, political and religious, in which the world was held by the Pope of Rome and his creatures, immediately before it. They know the mighty change which it produced, and they appreciate duly the ameliorations which it wrought in the state of society, and the unspeakable privileges which it restored to the people of God, and their *heart* is in it, and they are now weeping over it. But they are very few.

There is another class, more numerous, in whose minds the impressions

of all these things are faint and scarcely intelligible. They have heard the old people talk about the Reformation, and about the Reformers, as very bold and extraordinary men. They have some tolerable knowledge of the leading doctrines of grace. They think it is "well enough for the church to have a Testimony—they see no harm in it;" and the measure of their interest in it may be inferred from their own words, which are often repeated, viz: "they see no use in being so strenuous about *points* as their fathers were: some of them sacrificed their lives foolishly," &c.

There is a third class, which I fear is the major part of many a congregation, who know nothing more of it than the name; nothing of the mighty struggle between Bible truth and Popish blasphemy; nothing of the hardships, persecutions and deaths of the gifted, self-denying men, by means of which the God of our Lord Jesus causes them this day to enjoy freedom, civil and religious. They know not the reasons why they are not this day prostrating before some image of the Virgin Mary, beseeching her to use her interest with her Son, or obtaining absolution from a priest, with a sum of money. Neither are they sensible of the obligations that lie on them, for the happy difference of their condition—nor the weight of their responsibility to continue it to their children. It is with difficulty they make a few correct statements of their belief to a minister and Session, when admitted to the Lord's table; and if charitable allowance were not often made for weak faith and small attainments, they could not be admitted at all. 'Tis but one or two heads of doctrine that they do clearly understand.

They know not why there should be a public Testimony—why a scriptural Psalmody only—why public religious covenanting: without any fixed belief or distinct apprehension in their minds, they can gravely assent to every proposition, as it is read and explained before them; they can promise the whole course of life required by their profession, and yet at the same time heartily mean and purpose *nothing*. And, as they do not have the knowledge of the *Lord's way*, it is impossible that they can esteem it in their hearts, or exert themselves in its behalf. It is like a dead language, of which indeed they can name the letters and pronounce the words, but they know not their meaning, and of course can neither be convinced nor persuaded by the argument in them, nor moved by their eloquence. To these you may explain and teach with all diligence and painfulness, all your life long; it is all *vox et præteræ nihil, nothing but sound*. The sense of duties sits lightly on their minds.—Sometimes they have it in a small degree, but often they have it not, and almost any thing can drive it away, and duty is easily forgotten, or through carelessness omitted. They can be now and then from the public preaching, upon the most trifling grounds. Family worship is not observed morning and evening; secret prayer is seldom practised. Almost any worldly business can deter them from attending a meeting of the congregation for public business. They are defective in the measure of support which they *promise* to the ordinances, and negligent in fulfilling even that; and very many of christian duties are never attempted at all.

There is a fourth class, in what is called religious community, more numerous than the preceding, that know *nothing at all* of Reformation principles, and *care* nothing at all about them; and from all that can be learned of their mind from their actions, they are determined *not to know*. They appear to be afraid lest truth should force itself upon their convictions, ere ever they are aware of it, and therefore shun every appearance of it. Introduce it into conversation, in the most inoffensive and winning manner possible, and they are as silent as if their thoughts had all become instantly extinct, and their soul had become inert. Explain

it to them in a set discourse, and they are scarcely conscious of hearing you speak. Offer it to them in a book, and they will not buy it. Lend it to them, and they will not read it. As a last resort, ask a little money from them to carry on this work and way of the Lord, seeing they are very liberal to any thing and every thing else, and all at once they become very economical, and cannot spare it.

Of this sort, you will find not a few of the sons and daughters that have been baptised in the Associate church, and have lived to years of maturity under the eye of her members, in full communion. But as for them, they care nothing about the vows of baptism, or the profession; and if they were to *think* of the thing, they consider any other profession just as good as this. When they become the head of a family, they keep aloof from all religious exercise together: no secret prayer, no family worship, no asking a blessing before meals, is in their habitation. Not the least regard is paid to any thing spiritual or christian. You would be tempted to imagine yourself transported into the heart of Hindostan, where the gospel has never reached, although it is but the next door to a dwelling in which you were in the company of the righteous, where "is heard the melody of joy and health."

But it is only a small proportion of this sort that have any kind of connection with the Associate church, or any other orthodox body. They meet you every where in the protestant world, by thousands; in Scotland, England, Ireland, Europe and America; in every Congregational, Presbyterian and Episcopal connection; in every grade of society, and every office in the church. You will find them in the pulpit, in the judiciary, at the press, and possessing a prevailing influence over public opinion. These are the people that "will not endure sound doctrine;" that "have turned away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables;" and "by reason of them, the way of truth is evil spoken of."—(2 Tim. iv. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 2.)

Now, reader, let me here stop to ask you a question. Suppose the Pope be now mustering all his forces, in order to crush the Reformation at once, and suppose that nine-tenths of the Protestants who have to stand in defence are people of the above description, what have we to expect? Look to it, for this is the true state of the case. They, the Catholics, are pouring into this country, with the knowledge and design of the popish Holy Alliance, by hundreds of thousands, every year. They are supplied with abundance of money. Their religion is adapted to the taste of sinful men and women—their cause is daily becoming more popular. And this is not all: they are the *sword of God Almighty*, which he is drawing out of his scabbard, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant; for we Protestants have lightly esteemed the freedom which he wrought for us in the Reformation, and cast it behind our backs; and it is but just that we should be made again to feel and know the difference between his service, and the service of the Pope and the *mother of harlots* and abominations of the earth. "What will ye do in the day of the Lord's anger?" What will any of the fore mentioned classes of professors, (one excepted) do to save the world from being again trampled under the feet of his Holiness at Rome? What will your liberal views, your unions, your compromising policy, your banishing of all party distinctions and sectarian principles, do to fortify the minds of Protestants against the assaults of his "*all deceivableness of unrighteousness*," or sustain their souls under the pressure of his "*violence*?" The words of the prophet come forcibly to my mind here: "Thou also shalt be drunken; thou shalt be hid; thou also shalt seek help, because of the enemy; all thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the first ripe figs; if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater. Behold thy people in the

midst of thee are women; the gates of thy land shall be set wide open to thine enemies; the fire shall devour thy bars." (Nahum iii. 11, 12, 13.)

Had the prophet lived in our times, and been sent with a warning, threatening voice to the Protestant part of community, I cannot conceive any terms in which he could have more truly set forth our danger, and our perfect weakness to meet it. Such is our profound ignorance of Reformation principles, and our disesteem for them, and to such a length has the mad spirit of licentiousness carried us, that we—millions of us—are as ready to fall into Roman Catholic sentiments, as the first ripe fig was to fall into the mouth of the eater. And those who still have some head knowledge of these things, are in respect of attachment to them, and strength of heart to defend them, *but as women*.

But to return. There is still a large portion of what is called Christian community, whose character has not been fully taken up under any of the preceding descriptions, because they have passed them a great way in their apostacy from God. Nor do I well know how to bring them fully before the reader.

I must go back to the point from which I started, and state first, that the Lord's way has no place in their hearts. Their meditations, affections, desires, love and delights are all empty of it. They acknowledge not its authority, and yield it no obedience. Their hearts feel at liberty to embrace whatever objects they choose, among the many that present. Each chooses according to his own taste, or, more properly, according to his reigning passion or lust, and therefore there is a great variety.—Let us look at it for a moment, as it is foretold in 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4: "For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, boasters, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce despisers of those that are good; traitors, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," &c. Had the great apostle been a great painter, and had a large portion of the present generation sat for their likeness, he could not have drawn them so accurately as they are in this moral picture. He does not in each expression give you, it is true, every feature of the character of each class, but he gives the most prominent and leading one in such vivid colors that no man of discernment can fail to recognize the original.

"*Lovers of their own selves*"—selfish to an extreme. There is no way of inducing them to engage heartily in behalf of another, or in any public cause, if their own interest is not to be promoted by it.

"*Covetous*." So greedy of gain, so ardently desirous to be rich, that it pains them to see another obtain an advantage. They have no time for family religion—nothing to spare for "him that needs." It is all a saving that can be kept back from support of gospel ordinances. If produce or trade bring not in so much as they expected, they are almost ready to say that Providence has wronged them out of their own.

"*Proud*." They despise others, and the things and doings of others. There is nothing done, if *they* have not done it; nothing is worthy of notice, if it is not *theirs*; nothing puts them in greater distress than to make others equal to *them*, especially in that thing in which their pride delights peculiarly to dwell.

"*Boasters*." It is difficult to give such instances of boasting as will place them fully before the reader's mind, because almost every thing is matter of boasting now. We boast of "our enlightened age," and the "march of mind;" our "rapid improvements," our "independence," our "republican institutions," our "happy country." And this is not all; we might be borne with to this extent of folly; but we boast still more

loudly of *our* "charitable views" and "liberal sentiments," *our* "freedom from a sectarian spirit," "*our* benevolent associations," and "*our* liberal donations." We are a large body; we have our *improved mode* of conducting public worship, and of illustrating doctrine; and the praises of our religious meetings, down pourings of the Spirit, hopeful conversions, and fervent piety, might rend the very heavens.

"*Blasphemers*," that is, those who speak evil of any of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, word or works. If the Reformation was a work of God, (and who dare dispute it,) then this generation cannot satisfy itself with enough of evil said of it. The sole use of the inspired Psalms in the praise of God, is, we know, one of his ordinances. Some are proud to be perfectly ignorant of them, and ask with an air of curiosity, "if they are made use of in your churches." Others charge upon them the most greivous things, such as hindering devotion, breathing a revengeful spirit, and being unfit for christian worship. If the Sabbath be his ordinance then are there many blasphemers of it. If the doctrines of a free salvation, be, in substance, a part of his word, then we know they are evil spoken of, in the most solemn and deliberate manner from the pulpit, the press, and in the private circle. The names and titles of God are exceedingly profaned in common conversation, in almost every circle.

"*Disobedient to parents*." It is not obedience to parents to submit to their authority until the age of twenty-one, merely because the law of the country will compel us to do so, or because it is commonly done. It is not obedience to parents, if we do it from the same disposition with a slave. It is not, unless we do it from love and veneration, and a sense of gratitude; nay, not unless we "obey them in the Lord," and if this be a correct statement, then disobedience to parents has become one of the great transgressions of this generation; and out of it springs that impudence that mocks at superiority, and that bold licentious daring which sets all law at defiance. Children put on the airs of men, and treat men like children, just because they have been allowed to trample on parental authority. The first human beings we should esteem, and esteem the highest, is our parents; and if our turbulent passions are allowed to disregard *them*, it is impossible that we should be expected to esteem any other according to their place or station.

"*Unthankful*." That is the same as ingratitude, which is a base disposition in the estimation of all men. To say nothing of what is done in private, if a man would give away a whole estate in aid of what are called benevolent associations, he will get no thanks. It is enough for him that he escapes the reproach of being behind the spirit of the age.—Humble petition has almost grown into a *demand*, and voluntary donation into a *debt*. And it were the less a matter, if the name of charming benevolence were in many cases not used to conceal base hypocrisy, selfishness and down-right villany. But we ought to wonder the less at ingratitude towards men, when the countless benefactions of God himself are overlooked and abused, to the service of sin, his greatest enemy, or altogether denied. *His* air which we breathe, his light which we behold, his earth which we enjoy, his rain &c., is nought, or ours of right. *Our* fine country, our abundant crops, our prosperous trade, our national prosperity, free institutions, &c., all are *ours*. It is our right hand and our arm that has done all—as much as if there were not a God in heaven at all! Reader, the utterance of such a sentiment in the light of your *understanding* may well make you startle, but it is indeed the language of many hearts. And as for religious freedom and pure gospel ordinances, who and where is he that is careful to bless God for them? Generally speak-

ing they are rather matters of tolerance than of gratitude, and it is quite enough if men give to them a yawning drowse attendance.

"*Unholy.*" If allowed vanity be as defiling as it is disgusting, if covetousness be equivalent to idolatry which is spiritual whoredom, if carnal talk on a Sabbath-day be an unholy thing, and if a carnal mind through the wreck be a troubled ocean "continually casting up mire and dirt;" if, when the sow that was washed, again wallows in the mire, and the dog returns and eats his own vomit; or, when we confess and pray and fast, and then deliberately return to the commission of the same sins again, it is by all reckoned abominable,—then what multitudes of *unholy* people are there.

ART. III. *Vindication of the Principles of the Church of Scotland, in relation to Questions presently agitated: An Address by the Associate Synod of Original Seceders.*

(Continued from Vol. XI.)

The Synod having thus declared their disapprobation of what is denominated the "Voluntary System," consider themselves called upon to express their views regarding the corruptions which attach to the religious establishments of this country, and particularly that of Scotland, from which they are more immediately in a state of secession. And they cannot enter on this subject without premising, that one reason why they regret the extreme to which some Seceders have of late proceeded, is the tendency which it has to discredit and weaken the force of that testimony which they still continue to bear against these corruptions, and to induce the members of the Establishment, in self-defence, and from the dread of revolutionary efforts, to color over, to support, and to cling to, what otherwise they might have been disposed to condemn and remove.

It was quite natural that ministers and members connected with this Synod should have been led, in the contest which has lately arisen, occasionally to co-operate with those of the Establishment in opposing the scheme which aims at a divorce between religion and government; and to take part in meetings and petitions for the repeal of the law of patronage—a grievance which affects men as citizens as well as church members. Had they remained passive and indifferent as in this last article, which entered so immediately into the ground of the commandings of their fathers, and the causes of the secession, they would justly have exposed themselves to the suspicion of insincerity in the testimony which they have borne against that evil, if not also to the suspicion of wishing it to hang as a millstone on the neck of the Establishment, or to remain as a ground of perpetual separation. Some have taken occasion, from this circumstance, to represent the ministers of this Synod as ready to return to the Established church, if lay patronage only were abolished, and a door opened by the church herself for their reception. To remove this misrepresentation, to give direction to the people under their charge in a critical time, and to let all men know what are their principles and views, they think it necessary to be explicit on this head.

Our objections to the Established Church of Scotland are not confined

to her administration. We cannot unreservedly approve of her constitution, as it was established at the revolution. Though our fathers were in communion with that church, yet they, together with many faithful men who died before the Secession, and some who continued in the Establishment after that event, were all along dissatisfied with several things in the settlement of religion at the revolution, and in the ratification of it at the union between Scotland and England. The first Seceders, in their Judicial Testimony and Declaration of Principles, specified several important points with respect to which that settlement involved a sinful departure from a previous settlement of religion in Scotland, which distinctly held forth as exhibiting the model, in point of scriptural purity and order, of that reformed constitution to which they sought by their contentings to bring back the church of their native land. This Synod occupy the same ground with the first Seceders. They are aware that the Established Church of Scotland has it not in her power to correct all the evils of the revolution settlement, which they feel themselves bound to point out; but they cannot warrantably quit their position of secession, until the Established church show a disposition to return to that reformed constitution, by using means to correct what is inconsistent with it, so far as it is competent to her, in the use of those powers which belong to her as an ecclesiastical and independent society under Christ, her head, and by due applications to the State for having those laws rescinded or altered which affect her purity and abridge her freedom. It will be found, on a careful and candid examination, that a great part of the evils, in point of administration, which are chargeable on the Church of Scotland, may be traced, directly or indirectly, to the defects and errors cleaving to her Establishment at the revolution; and, as it is her duty, so it will be her safety, seriously to consider these, and, following the direction of scripture and the example of our reforming ancestors, to confess them before God, and seek their removal.

The revolution settlement came far short of embracing the former attainments of the church and nation in religious reformation. In general, its grand defect lay in wholly overlooking the civil and ecclesiastical reform attained to between 1638 and 1650, generally termed the period of the Second Reformation.

The Synod are not disposed to judge harshly of men who had recently escaped from the furnace of persecution, and who had strong temptations to contend with; but truth compels them to say, that the proceedings of the church at that period were also marked by sinful defects, which, from the injurious influence they had on her future history, demand especial notice. Pleased with what they had obtained, and afraid of offending the civil powers by what might be construed as unseasonable interference, the first General Assembly which met after the revolution, in the year 1690, sat down under the above Establishment, without making a single remonstrance against its defective character, or exerting their intrinsic powers as a court of Christ, to supply, so far as lay within their own province, what was wanting. No act was passed approving of the several steps of reformation during the second reforming period, confessing the defections made from it by the church and nation, or vindicating it from the indignities cast on it in the great apostacy of the two preceding reigns. Though the royal prerogatives of Christ had been then daringly invaded, and the whole government of the church impiously usurped by the crown, yet that Assembly neither formally condemned these usurpations, nor expressly asserted the sole headship of Christ over his church, or her intrinsic power, as his spiritual, free and independent kingdom. Nor did the Assembly, either at that or any subsequent meeting, assert the perpetual obligation of our national covenants, or even the

morality of these deeds, in the perfidious violation of which all ranks had contracted so much guilt.

But what tended more perhaps than any thing else to swell the torrent of defection which overrun the Church of Scotland so soon after the revolution, was the tame submission of the church to the terms prescribed by the State for the admission of the Episcopalian ministers into her communion, simply on their subscribing the Confession of Faith, and their engaging not to seek the subversion of Presbytery, as being the only recognized government of this church. The consequence of this was, that hundreds of ministers were admitted into her judicatories who were either secretly attached to episcopacy, or destitute of all fixed principles on the subject of church government, justly suspected of error in doctrine, and chargeable with having given their countenance to all the defections and the tyrannical measures of the former reigns. The consequences of this unfaithful policy, particularly as it effected the northern parts of Scotland, where conformity to prelacy had chiefly prevailed, continue to be felt in the councils of the church down to the present times. Nor were persons excluded from acting as elders in these judicatories, who had dipped their hands in the blood of the saints, and gave no satisfaction for this and other sins. In consequence of the defects of the revolution settlement, and the neglect of the church to assert firmly and explicitly the divine right of church government, encroachments were repeatedly made on ecclesiastical liberty; and even when the State did not directly interfere by proroguing and dissolving General Assemblies, the church courts fell under political management, from which, and its baneful effects, they have not escaped to this day.—These causes led, at an early period, to the formation of what has been called the moderate party, which, for upwards of a century, has had the management of the judicatories, and has not only defeated every attempt to reform the church, but uniformly supported the encroachments of the State on her remaining liberties, and given its decided countenance to Arian, Pelagian and Arminian errors, vented by ministers in her communion. At the same time, the minority, who, from the pulpit or in the church courts, bore testimony against these evils, were subjected to censure for their faithfulness. And thus the leaven of heresy, publicly countenanced by the judicatures, soon spread throughout the church, pervading all her administration, till the most numerous, as well as the most influential party became the avowed supporters of doctrines eversive of the gospel. This charge is not brought against them by Seceders alone: it has been admitted by members of the Establishment themselves, among whom nothing is more common than to distinguish the opposing parties in the church by the names of *moderate* and *evangelical*. It was this rapid progress of error in doctrine, connected with the tyrannical administration of the church, particularly in the application of the law of patronage, which had been restored in the year 1712, that was the immediate cause of the secession in 1733—a step which our fathers considered absolutely necessary for the vindication of truth, and no less necessary for the relief of parishes groaning under the oppression of a system which intruded on them an unfaithful or unedifying minister.

This Synod have always condemned that article in the treaty of union between England and Scotland, by which the Scottish nation gave its consent to the perpetuating of the hierarchy in England, as inconsistent with a previous treaty, sacredly ratified, which provided for “the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed churches,” and for the complete abolition of prelacy, as the great obstacle to this most desirable object. In

consequence of the legislative union with England, the imposition of the abjuration oath and the test act, with other causes, the members of the Scottish Establishment were gradually led to look upon conformity with the Church of England as innocent, until at last all proper sense of the evils of prelacy, and of the semi-popish ceremonies with which it has always been combined, is in a great measure worn off their minds. After what the Synod have already advanced, it is hardly necessary for them to say that they feel no sympathy with such views. They look on the refusal of the English church to reform, and the obstinacy with which she continues to cling to flagrant abuses, as one great cause of the critical state into which our ecclesiastical establishments have been brought.— Had the plan of religious reformation and uniformity laid down in the Westminster standards been honestly carried into operation, it would have prevented that vast increase of dissent which now threatens, and at no very distant period may accomplish, the subversion of the whole English Establishment: nor, in that case, would Ireland have presented the humiliating spectacle, in the nineteenth century, of a nation forming so intimate a part of this Protestant empire, groaning under the miseries superinduced by papal ignorance and superstition. It is deeply to be regretted that the Church of England, which promised, in the reign of Edward VI., to become the bulwark of Protestantism, should have fallen into the hands of arbitrary princes and ambitious churchmen, who, by moulding it to suit their own worldly views, deprived it of the power of self expansion and self purification. As it is, the Synod must condemn the constitution of the English Establishment as decidedly Erastian, in consequence of the power granted to the king, as the temporal head of the church, and supreme judge in all causes ecclesiastical. The civil places and power of churchmen, and in particular the appointment of the bishops as a constituent portion of one of the estates in Parliament, under the denomination of lords spiritual, we consider to be as detrimental to the interests of religion, as it is inconsistent with the nature of Christ's kingdom, which is "not of this world." The whole frame of the hierarchy is without the shadow of foundation in scripture; a corruption of the primitive order instituted by Christ in his church, which originated in human invention, and was carried to perfection under antichrist; a government in which the discipline and laws of Christ's house, for maintaining truth and purity, are deprived of all force; and which, therefore, may be abolished without endangering the existence or marring the beauty and efficiency of the English Establishment. We have not overlooked, nor have we contemplated with an indifferent eye, the late increase in the number of evangelical and zealous ministers within the Established churches of England and Ireland; but on the other hand, we cannot conceal from ourselves that these Establishments, as presently constituted, are fitted to be the tools of statesman; that their bishoprics and other rich benefices will generally be bestowed on those who have the greatest political influence, and that it is vain to expect that an effectual check will be to put to pluralities, non-residents and sinecures. While, therefore, we disclaim all connection with the principles of those who are now seeking the subversion of the Establishments of England and Ireland, we are equally unprepared to join in the latitudinarian scheme, which, regarding all forms of church government as indifferent, would perpetuate the hierarchy, in the vain hope of seeing it converted into an effective organ for reforming the church, and diffusing the blessings of religion throughout the nation.

To return, however, to the Scottish Establishment, in which we are more immediately interested, the Synod readily admit that, of late years, there has been a revival of evangelical doctrine within her pale, and it

gives them much pleasure to observe other movements, particularly as to chapels of ease, which are of an encouraging nature ; but they regret to see that no measures as yet proposed for that purpose strike at the root of the evils which have long tarnished the glory and marred the usefulness of the Church of Scotland, or promise to remove these so as to prepare the way for their return to her fellowship. A scriptural reformation never did, and never can, take place in a church by half measures. The call of Christ addressed to the church of Ephesus, is applicable to all churches in similar circumstances, "Remember from whence thou hast fallen, and repent, and do the first works." Little or no disposition, however, as yet appears, at least in the Courts of the Established Church, to return to her reformed and covenanted constitution. In the recent defences of the Establishment by its ministers and members, references are sometimes made to the first Reformation, but seldom to the second, though it not only comprised all that was excellent in the first, but carried the church forward to higher attainments. Though it is undeniable that, at that period, the reformation of the Church, combined, as it then was, with a reformation of the State in matters connected with religion, was blessed by heaven for the revival of practical godliness, to a degree that has seldom been equalled in this or any other country,—there seems, even among the most zealous reformers within the national Church at present, an aversion to the measures then pursued, and the principles then maintained, which affords us little ground to hope for a similar revival of the Divine work.

At the second Reformation, the scriptural origin and authority of Presbytery was distinctly asserted and demonstrated, in opposition to prelacy. This ground, however, has been generally abandoned, even by the evangelical party in the Church ; and it would appear from the language of some of the late most strenuous defenders of our Establishment, that they would have been equally pleased had Episcopacy been the established religion. This may be traced partly to causes already stated ; partly to the latitudinarian views adopted by the orthodox during their unsuccessful struggle with the moderate party in the eighteenth century. The Synod lament this indifference, not only as manifesting a want of gratitude to God for the deliverance granted to Scotland from prelatic domination, and of proper respect to the memory of our ancestors who shed their blood in this cause, but as indicating much ignorance of the real importance of the controversy maintained in this country between presbytery and prelacy, which involved the liberties of the Christian church and the rights of the Christian ministry, and as obliging the friends of the Church to fight their "Voluntary" adversaries at great disadvantage, while they occupy the low ground of expediency, both as to an Establishment and the Church established.

During both reforming periods, solemn public engagements, and the renovation of them, were remarkably blessed for promoting reformation, and reviving it when nearly overthrown by its enemies. Proceeding on the principle which lies at the foundation of national establishments of religion, that organised society, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is the subject of God's moral government, as well as individual persons, and, as such, capable of social engagements and public faith ; and that society thus constituted, is recognised both by God and man as a permanent body, whose moral identity is unaffected by the constant change taking place among the individuals composing it,—our reforming ancestors considered that our national covenants, having a permanent object, must be of perpetual obligation on all ranks in these lands to the latest posterity : and many of them sealed their testimony for this sublime truth with their blood. The same doctrine is held by this Synod ; and so long as this

doctrine was held by Seceders in general, they never once dreamed of waging war against the principle of Establishments. But how much soever the ministers of the present Establishment disagree with the advocates of the "Voluntary" system in other respects, the most of them seem to go hand in hand with them, in treating with neglect, if not with contempt, these national deeds. We cannot avoid declaring, that they have in so far abandoned one of their principal strongholds as a national Church. They hold their temporal emoluments by a national grant made to them at the time of the Reformation; but can they with a good grace plead the permanent obligation of the national faith pledged in that grant, so long as they overlook or deny the permanent obligation of our national engagements in support of the Reformation itself? If the nation has proved unfaithful in the one case, and they have kept silence, without testifying against breach of covenant as a great national sin, can they reasonably expect that it will prove faithful in the other? By abandoning the Reformation as a covenanted work, and dropping from her profession the continued obligation of these national deeds, the present Church of Scotland has done more to pave the way for her own ruin, than all that has been done, or could have been done by 'Voluntary Associations,' had she pursued a different course. The National Covenant, as renewed in 1638, and the Solemn League and Covenant, though condemned by the law of the State, are approved by laws of the Church, which have never been set aside by any ecclesiastical authority: but these have long been a dead letter; and a party who refuses to renew a lawful contract which he has failed to perform, is viewed, in the sight both of God and man, as disowning it and setting its obligation at nought.

It was, moreover, the uniform practice of the Reformed Church of Scotland, in her purer times, when threatened with danger, from within and from without, to return to God, by making public confession of her own sins and those of the nation, and by renewing her covenant with God. The year 1596 exhibited the rare and edifying spectacle of a whole General Assembly publicly confessing, with tears, the sins with which they were chargeable in their station, and, with uplifted hands, renewing their former vows, preparatory to their engaging in a more extensive purification of the Church. All who are acquainted with the history of the Church know, that the same exercise was repeated, at various subsequent periods, and that the present standards of the Church of Scotland are the direct and intended results of the Solemn League. The Synod, however, are sorry to observe little or no disposition, as yet, in the national Church, to acknowledge the several steps of defection from her reformed principles and practice, and that, if alluded to at all, these are spoken of as abuses that have accidentally crept in during the lapse of time, and not as sins, highly dishonouring to the great Head of the Church. We trust, that many individuals in the Establishment feel very differently; but the general prevalence of this tone of feeling, even among the better party, gives little encouragement to expect a dutiful return to God. A Church which remains proud and unhumiliated, under threatened judgments and visible marks of divine displeasure, cannot be a reforming Church.

Farther, in former times, few things more distinguished the Church of Scotland than her faithfulness in maintaining the purity of Christian and ministerial communion, by purging the Church of unworthy members and erroneous teachers. The Synod, however, have too just cause to complain of the general relaxation of this ancient discipline in the present Establishment. The total want, in many places, of kirk-sessions, (where all discipline on the members of the Church ought to begin,) the want of due qualifications to the eldership generally, the prevalence of private

baptism, and the almost indiscriminate admission to sealing ordinances in numerous congregations, by means of which profaneness and inattention to religious duties are countenanced and encouraged, are evils which, from being overlooked, if not sanctioned, by the higher judicatories, amount to a systematic and allowed laxity of communion, very different from those incidental acts of mal-administration which are inseparable from the present imperfect state of the Church, and do not warrant separation. With regard to public teaching, it is notorious, that, for more than a century, Arian and Arminian tenets were taught from many pulpits of the Church of Scotland; and that even in the present time, the designation of Moderate, as applied to a large party in the Church, indicates a radical difference in doctrine, as well as in views of church polity, from the party styled Evangelical. We admit, that the Assembly of late discovered a laudable zeal in condemning what was called the Row Heresy. But we have to complain of the indefinite language in which that condemnation was expressed, as calculated to injure truth, especially when we consider, that it was founded on the act of Assembly 1720, condemning the Marrow of Modern Divinity,—an act which gave just cause of offence and alarm to some of the most excellent men then in the Church. Nothing tends more to obscure the gospel, or to perplex the exercise of serious persons, than to confound the assurance which a person may have of his being a Christian, with that appropriating assurance, or fiducial reliance on Christ, which is founded on the Divine testimony. This last, in common with all the reformers, we consider as belonging to the nature of saving faith. Had the late Assembly adverted to the fact, that their predecessors, in 1720, had, in their eagerness to guard against Antinomianism, contradicted an express doctrine of their own Confession, by condemning the assertion, that believers are wholly free from the law as the covenant of works, they would have chosen a safer guide in their procedure against modern errors. We are constrained to add, that nothing like the same zeal has been displayed in rebuking the errors which appear on the “Moderate” side of the house; and if we were to judge of the future faithfulness of the Assembly from the manner in which they dismissed the charge brought, at their last meeting, against a Reverend Doctor, of having published Arminian doctrine, on a simple disclaimer by himself,—a mode of proceeding similar to that employed by the courts, toward the close of last century, in the case of Dr. McGill of Ayr, we would have little encouragement to expect a speedy return of the Church of Scotland to purity of doctrine.

The late decision of the General Assembly on Patronage is also very discouraging. Perhaps no Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland ever before gave such positive countenance to this infringement on ecclesiastical liberties. Though they hardly expected that the Assembly was prepared to petition for the abolition of the law of Patronage, the Synod cannot refrain from expressing their surprise at the attempts made to deny that the Church of Scotland was originally, and by her constitution, opposed to that law. They had supposed that none, who had studied her principles and contendings, could fail to perceive, that not the abuses merely, but the very existence of lay-patronage in the Church, is condemned in her ancient standard books, and formed the ground of her continued protest, from the first dawn of the Reformation almost down to the conclusion of the last century; that, even in its mildest form, and when checked in every possible way by her own laws, it was felt and denounced as a grievous yoke and burden; that in short, it was condemned, not simply on account of its inexpediency, its injurious tendency, or its unlimited pretensions, but as, in its own nature, a sinful encroachment on the spirituality, the freedom, and independence of the

Church, and consequently on the royal prerogative of Christ, her Divine Head. To whatever extent our reformers may have differed, at different periods, as to the particular mode of ecclesiastical election, and whatever interpretations may be put upon the Books of Discipline and Acts of Assembly regarding this, there never existed a doubt or dispute about patronage, which they uniformly declared to be incompatible with the freedom of election in every form—an absolute and unmingled evil, which they found it necessary to tolerate as a grievance, but which, lest their toleration should be construed into a sanction of it, they never ceased to condemn as a usurpation on the part of the state, from which they prayed to be delivered. During the reign of “Moderation” at the close of last century, the instructions annually given to the commission of the Assembly, to seize every fit opportunity of petitioning the legislature for the repeal of the Patronage Law, were allowed to drop, on pretext of the fruitlessness of the appeal. But the last meeting of the Assembly, by refusing, in opposition to the general wish of the Christian people, and notwithstanding the prospect of success, to petition for that repeal, formally stamped on that law their seal of approbation. Nor is this remedied by their Declaratory Act concerning Calls. Viewing that act merely as a provisional measure to counteract the evils of patronage till its removal could be obtained, we would object to it as making the absence of dissent from the patron’s presentation, the ground of the Church’s procedure to settlement, instead of the call of the people. But our chief objection lies against it as a substitute for the protest formerly maintained against patronage, the continuance of which it contemplates, and attempts to perpetuate, by rendering it less obnoxious to the people in appearance; while the cumbrous appendage of rules by which it is proposed to carry the act into execution, is calculated to deter a prudent people from an opposition, which, how reasonable soever it might be in itself, would involve them in all the intricacies of troublesome and expensive litigation.

We find ourselves called upon, therefore, to re-assert the ancient doctrine of the Scottish Church, that the order of election, according to the word of God, “cannot stand with patronages and presentation to benefices;” which, as the barbarous names themselves would denote, “flowed from the pope and the corruption of the canon law only.” We maintain with our fathers, that lay-patronage must, from its very nature, be incompatible with the independence of the Church as a spiritual society; and that the State has no more right to elect the pastors of the Church, than the Church to elect the rulers of the State. How would it be tolerated, were the General Assembly to assume the power of nominating any of the king’s ministers and officers of State? or were a foreign prince to claim a similar power, even though a veto should be left in the king’s hand? What a mock would it have been thought, if the recently created electors had got only a veto! And why should the Church, the freest society on earth, the much-loved and honoured spouse of Christ, whose liberties have been purchased by the blood of her Divine Head, and secured by the charter of heaven, be subjected to a similar dictation on the part of the State? Is it because there is no king in the midst of her? or because it is thought that the rights of his kingdom may be more safely invaded and bartered away, than those of earthly sovereigns? Is it because the legislature presumed that her watchmen were become blind and dumb? or that her citizens were now prepared to crouch to a yoke, which formerly “neither they nor their fathers were able to bear?” It is impossible that a church can be truly free, so long as the initial appointment of her ministers is vested in a foreign power, over which she

has no control—so long as her pastors must ask admission into her pulpits, and her people must submit to receive them, at the hands of persons who may not be only aliens to the Church, but her avowed enemies, infidels, or profligates.

(To be concluded.)

ART. IV.—*The Sabbath Magazine.*

This is a work published Monthly in the city of New York, and edited by the Rev. James Irvine; and is designed to promote the observance of the Sabbath. Each number contains 16 pages, and the price is \$1 per annum in advance. The editor concludes a long and well written address as follows:

But the most alarming circumstance remains untold. *Professing Christians are chargeable with Sabbath violations.* “Even with us there are sins against the Lord our God.” The people of God have a moral influence which, when duly exerted, secures respect for every religious institution. This influence creates a great responsibility. But notwithstanding this responsibility, multitudes of professors, and even ministers of the sanctuary, can look with apparent unconcern upon the most dreadful scenes of Sabbath profanation. They can witness the triumphs of infidelity in weakening Sabbath sanctions, and yet exert little or no influence to shield this holy institution. There is with us more than this negative guilt. Professors of godliness can even join hand in hand with infidels in heaven-daring desecrations of this holy day! Ichabod, is an inscription characteristic of the times with regard to the Sabbath: “for the glory has departed.” And is it not for wo, when the Christian’s ark of glory thus falls into the hands of the uncircumcised? It is for our affliction, and their destruction.

From the great importance of this holy day, and the prevalence of its profanation, it must be manifest to every reflecting pious mind, that *a great Sabbath reformation is necessary.* If we would preserve all that is valuable in human attainments, and prevent the dark and murderous reign of infidelity; leave to our children the rich legacy of well regulated civil institutions, and further the eternal interests of generations yet unborn, we must speedily put forth all our energies to effect such a reformation.

To this great work the church must be excited. She must exert all her energies. From the pulpit and from the press, the Sabbath’s righteous claims must be urged;—and every private Christian must give all his influence in favor of the work. Well-informed holy zeal is requisite. This sacred fire, kindling from heart to heart, will soon reach thousands; and by its genial influence, warm them into life and activity in this cause of God and of the world. The fervent and importunate prayer of faith must be superadded. This will secure the shield of Omnipotence to cover and protect this holy institution; and engage, if there were need, legions of ministering spirits, to promote, in ways unknown, this holy work.

But reproach of conscience will effectually suppress the risings of holy zeal in any cause, and entirely prevent holy boldness at a throne of grace. Heavenly fire kindles only in purified hearts; and the hands that are lifted up without doubting, must be *holy hands.* The successful reformer, therefore must be self reformed. An exemplary observance of the Sabbath is the best recommendation that any Christian can give of this holy institution. And when the church “looks forth as the morn-

ing, fair as the moon, and clear as the sun," then is she "terrible as an army with banners."

When the church comes up rightly prepared for the work, and with all her energies exerted, it will soon be accomplished. The blessing of the God of Israel will descend upon her, and her labors will be crowned with abundant success. Her own numbers will be greatly increased, and her influence greatly extended. Then, a "fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

In every department of the great Christian enterprise, the genial influence of a Sabbath reformation would be felt. In the promotion of this holy cause the friends of every moral and religious institution should manifest a deep concern.

In a word, the best interests of our country, and of the world require such a reformation.

But in the accomplishment of an end so desirable, care in the selection of the most suitable means is highly requisite. The importance of a well conducted periodical publication, devoted expressly to this cause, can scarcely be doubted. The powerful influence of such publications, designed to promote special objects, has been felt in other departments of moral and religious reform; and this fact warrants the expectation of a similar result in this cause. Of this we have for a long time, been fully persuaded. Our belief is confirmed by the concurrent judgment of all whom we have consulted. And with the advice of several judicious laymen and clergymen of different denominations; and assured of their aid by articles for our pages, we have been induced to commence the publication of the SABBATH MAGAZINE.

Should it be objected, that such a work will not find access to those who need it most; we might reply, that this objection would stand with equal force against every publication designed to promote moral reform. But the objection is also met by the idea already advanced—that the work of Sabbath reformation must begin with professing Christians; and be promoted by the influence of *holy example* as well as of *holy precept*. But we add moreover, that we design, should we receive patronage sufficient to meet the expense, to strike off in tract form, and for gratuitous distribution among Sabbath scholars; children, youth, and others who may be found in the streets on the Sabbath; and all others who may stand in special need of such instruction, such articles from the Magazine as pious and judicious advisers may, from time to time judge to be suitable.

Should it be objected, that there are already many religious publications conducted by pious and experienced editors, who are warm friends to the religious observance of the Christian Sabbath; and that these are sufficient for all the purposes intended in the establishment of our Magazine:—We would reply—that we are happy to join in full commendation of the piety and ability of these respected brethren: but, as their publications are either of a general character, or, if particular, for other special ends, than by us intended, we consider the necessity of the Sabbath Magazine by no means superceded. We will bless God if we may be enabled to become auxiliary to them in advancing the cause of our common Lord. We feel the full force of the fact, that religious publications are so multiplied that it is difficult for less wealthy Christians to give encouragement to every department in the Christian enterprise. But we would plead the importance of our cause; and notice the small sum required from each subscriber. We also indulge the hope that several of the more wealthy and liberal friends of the Redeemer will enable us to send this work to the poor and needy.

Anticipating the desire of the Christian public to know the principles

of the Editor, and the manner and spirit in which he proposes to conduct this Magazine, we here distinctly state that we hold :—That, since the resurrection of our blessed Redeemer, the first day of the week, denominated in the New Testament the “Lord’s day,” is the Christian Sabbath : That the Christian Sabbath is of moral and perpetual obligation until the end of time : That its right observance requires us to desist from all wordly employments, except works of necessity and mercy ; and to spend the whole day in the public and private exercises of God’s appointed worship :—And that Parents and Masters are bound to permit all who are subordinate to them to rest from their labor, and to encourage them to keep this day holy. And while it is our belief that, in the promotion of Sabbath sanctification, much more may be expected from moral suasion than from legal coercion, we nevertheless boldly maintain, that legal enactments in favor of the Christian Sabbath, and to prevent external violations of this consecrated rest, are not only right, but righteously required of all who are elevated to legislative authority in this Christian land.

Although we will fearlessly maintain these principles ; we purpose to avoid as far as possible, the controversial form. When we speak of the duties, or practice of those in civil authority, we purpose to do it in terms expressive of due respect. Even when we oppose the principles and practice of unbelievers, we purpose to bring no “railing accusations ;” but to use the dictates of sober reason and experience, in connexion with the plain and forcible doctrines of divine revelation. These are the weapons which we have selected to use in defence of our avowed principles.

Every thing that is properly denominated sectarianism will be carefully excluded from the Sabbath Magazine.

Confiding more in the counsel and assistance of those who have kindly promised us aid than in our own wisdom or strength ; earnestly soliciting the prayers of all Christian brethren, and humbly, but firmly relying upon Him who can make effectual the means used to promote his own glorious cause—we enter upon this important work.

Yours most respectfully,

JAMES IRVINE.

NEW-YORK, A. D. 1835.

ART. V.—*Thoughts on the Temper and Employments of the Lord's Day.*

BY THE LATE WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

With respect to the *general temper* to be maintained on that sacred day, we ought, upon our first waking, to give it a peculiar welcome, rising with great alacrity, and, if we can, a little earlier than usual, hailing its return with joy. Then, dismissing worldly thoughts, we should endeavor to cherish those that are spiritual and heavenly, and to manifest throughout the day, in a more striking manner, a spirit of love, seeking to have the image of our heavenly Father more legibly impressed upon us, being followers of God as dear children, and walking in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us. We should pray for more peace and joy in believing, and abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost ; thus proving to all around us the happiness we experience, and showing them that we are more in our proper element this day than on any other, and tacitly inviting them to partake of the same privileges. Our accents should be kinder, and our countenances should beam with

livelier joy, and each interval of social recreation should have a savor of our eternal Sabbath above.

With respect to our employments, *one of our earliest and most serious exercises, should be faithful and minute self-examination*, that we may ascertain in which direction we have been proceeding, and what has been our progress, marking our deficiencies in the past week, asking on what subjects our thoughts have turned at intervals of leisure, upon what objects our affections have been chiefly set, what has been the character of our conversation and the tendency of our influence; inquiring whether those with whom we may have associated can bear us witness that we have sought to lead them to greater love to God and greater devotedness to his service; as we shall wish we had, when we meet them in the eternal world; finding out what were our tempers, under any petty provocation to which we may have been subject, whether we exhibited the meekness of Christ, whether we were ready to deny ourselves when duty called, whether we have been more earnest in our secret devotions, whether we have wasted less precious time. Thus we should enter into detail according to our character and temptations. Various other points also should be looked into; I mention these only as a specimen.

Secondly, we should engage in the *public services of the church, with seriousness, prayer, and an anxious desire for improvement*; seeking in the prayers to have real communion with God, an unbroken interview, as it were, with him; hearing his word with humble desire to profit, and listening to the sermon, sensible of our own utter inability to profit by any means, without divine assistance, and looking to God to give the increase. After church, we must be on our watch, lest our great spiritual enemy robs us of the good seed that may have been lodged in our hearts. I think it a good plan, and I wish my dear children to remember it, to turn the heads of the sermon into prayer on our return home.

A *third exercise* for this blessed day, is, *the numbering up and setting in order before the soul, all the mercies we have received from God, ever since we were born, to the present hour*. There is no sin oftner reproved in Scripture, and none, I am persuaded, of which we shall be found more guilty at the last day, than ingratitude. Let us think of the time and country in which we live, of the numerous evils from which we are exempted, of the temporal comforts we enjoy, of our religious privileges, the means of grace in such abundance, and with such clearness the hope of glory. Let us consider all the ways by which the Lord has led us, all the long suffering he has shown towards us, all the strivings of his blessed Spirit, which we too often have resisted. Above all, let us praise him for his unspeakable gift, in so loving the world as to give his only Son for our redemption. It is indeed true that, when memory has done her utmost, ten thousand of His mercies will escape our recollection; but even such an imperfect retrospect as we can take will soften our hard hearts, and tune our voices to join with the heavenly choir in ascribing blessing, and honor, and glory, and thanksgiving, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb.

Intercession is a *fourth sabbatical exercise*, and to my mind one of the sweetest. To pour out our hearts before God for all classes of men, for all who are in sorrow or suffering, in spiritual darkness or bondage. To pray for the success of all good designs, and the wider extension of our Saviour's kingdom. It is cheering in this view to read, on a Sunday evening, missionary accounts, which show how it pleases God to bless the endeavors that are made to enlighten the heathen. Especially we should intercede for all those who are dear to us by the ties of nature or friendship, adapting our petitions to their respective characters and cases. My

dear children may think of me at nine o'clock on the Sunday evening, as mindful of them, and often also at three in the afternoon.

As a *fifth* exercise, I would suggest that towards the close of the day, we should direct our meditation to the heavenly state, that eternal Sabbath of which this on earth is but a type. Let us pray that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, while we dwell on some of those glorious descriptions which are given us in Scripture, of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Take, for instance, that verse, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is;" or that, "We shall know even as we also are known;" or, when our minds are saddened by the afflictions of beloved friends, "Sorrow and sighing shall *fly away*;" a beautiful image expressive of their haste to leave the regions of bliss. There "the inhabitant shall no more say, 'I am sick;'" "There shall be no night there;" or, if we have lost any very dear to us, let us dwell on that blessed declaration, "There shall be no more death," "Behold I make all things new," "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "A crown of glory that fadeth not away." Such meditations will sweetly refresh our spirits, and animate us to run the race set before us with renewed vigor the ensuing week. Thus, also, we may have a foretaste, even in this lower region, of those pleasures which are at God's right hand, and may drink of the living fountains of water by which the Lamb of God leads his flock in the heavenly pastures, and of which he sometimes gives them a prelibation on this side of the grave.

ART. VI. Convention at Pittsburg.

The convention was opened at the appointed time, with a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Blythe; after which, it was organized by the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Green, as president, the Rev. Mr. Witherspoon, as vice-president, and Messrs. Culbertson, of Zanesville, and Fairchild, of Redstone Presbyteries, as secretaries. After the appointment of a committee to receive and report upon the character, &c. of documents, the convention resolved to spend the succeeding day in acts of religious worship—that, as a convention, they might go directly to the source of all wisdom, and to the giver of all grace, for direction and support. It was a day of particular interest to God's people here, and if we may judge from the decided, yet mild and harmonious action of the body, it was a day pregnant with blessings to God's Zion. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Cincinnati, preached in the morning; a prayer meeting was held in the afternoon, and the Rev. Dr. Junkin, president of Lafayette College, preached in the evening. On Saturday morning, at nine o'clock, the convention assembled. The committee alluded to above reported certain documents, and recommended the reading of one which presented most, if not all the points of grievances under which the church groans, and from which it is desirable to relieve her. After some interesting discussion, it was resolved that Drs. Junkin and Wilson, and the Rev. Mr. Witherspoon, together with Messrs. Boyd, of Brooklyn, N. Y., Owen, of Bedford county, and George, of Baltimore, be a committee to prepare a memorial, to be presented to the General Assembly by the *individuals* composing the convention and any others who may unite with them, when the convention shall have decided on the points to be embodied therein. The following points have already been discussed and ordered into the hands of that committee, to be incorporated into said memorial, viz: the propriety and necessity of placing all institutions which are calculated to operate an influence in educating or supporting our ministry under the direct jurisdiction of some ecclesiastical supervision; of disannulling all bodies which have been formed on the schismatic principle of elective affinity; of taking measures to abrogate the plan of union of 1801, entered into between the General Assembly and the Congregational church of New England. So far the discussions have already proceeded, and during which some of the most fearful and startling disclosures have been made. Systematic measures for disorganizing the

church seem to have been in operation, not only under the eye, but the guidance and direction of men who had sworn to support and defend that church! Yes, Sir, part of a document was read from a Presbyterian minister, in which he combats a doctrinal opponent by denying that either he or his church adopts or believes in a Confession of Faith!—*Presbyterian*.

ART. VII. General Assembly.

PITTSBURG, May 21, 1855.

The General Assembly convened this day in the First Presbyterian church in Pittsburg, (Dr. Herron's) and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Dr. Miller, from the text, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels"—a good and appropriate discourse. Rev. Dr. Lindslev, the last moderator being unable to attend the Assembly, requested the Rev. Dr. William A. McDowell, by letter, as the previous moderator, to preach the sermon and preside till another moderator was chosen. Dr. McDowell, being very unwell, requested Dr. Miller to preach the sermon; and before Dr. McDowell could take the chair, Dr. Ely stated that he was the *standing organ* of the Presbyterian church during the interval of the Assemblies, and stated that as Dr. Beman was the only previous moderator who was a member of the Assembly, he, by the constitution, should preside; he made a motion to this effect, and it prevailed. The Assembly then had recess till after dinner.

After recess, a motion was made to reconsider the motion appointing Dr. Beman. This gave rise to an animated and protracted debate, in which Drs. Miller, Magraw, Blythe, Junkin, with the Rev. Messrs. Witherspoon, Elliott, Winchester, and some others, contended that the chair ought to be occupied by Dr. McDowell; and by Dr. Ely, Mr. Darling and others, in opposition. The advocates of Dr. Beman took different grounds from one another. The second general rule for judicatories reads thus:

"If a quorum be assembled at the hour appointed, and the moderator be absent, the last moderator present shall be requested to take his place without delay."—*Rules for Judicatories*, p. 451.

Dr. Ely, in stating this rule, put in after the word "present," the following, viz: "being commissioner to the Assembly." The reasons why the motion to appoint Dr. Beman prevailed, were, 1st. The members did not know that Dr. McDowell was in the house. 2d. They supposed that Dr. Ely's interpolation was a part of the rule.—But during the discussion, some of the advocates of Dr. Beman took the ground that the rule related only to the last moderator immediately preceding, and therefore could not relate to Dr. McDowell. Others contended that these rules were not binding on the Assembly. Among these were Dr. Wisner, of Rochester; yet, as soon as the moderator was chosen, these very rules were, according to uniform custom, read to the moderator elect, as the ceremony of induction into office! However, the motion to reconsider prevailed, and the motion to appoint Dr. Beman was put again, and lost by about 40 votes. Dr. McDowell was then appointed, *nem. con.*

Dr. William A. McDowell, on taking the chair, said that he did not hold to the doctrine that Dr. Ely was the organ of the Presbyterian church during the intervals of the Assemblies.

Rev. Eliakim Phelps then nominated Rev. Mr. Leach, of Virginia, for moderator, and Dr. Miller nominated Dr. Phillips, of New-York; and Dr. Phillips (an Act and Testimony man) was elected.

For Dr. Phillips,.....117

Mr. Leach,.....85

—32 majority.

I think Dr. Phillips will preside with great dignity and efficiency.

FRIDAY, May 22.

To-day Mr. Breckenridge presented the report of the Board of Education, which, although it contains some hard things for new school men and irresponsible association men to digest, was, contrary to the usual custom of referring it to a committee, referred without a word of discussion directly to the board, with orders to print it. The minute referring to Dr. Beman's illegal appointment yesterday, was referred to a select committee, to bring in a minute giving a true historical statement of the case.—*Presbyterian*.

ART. VIII. *Affairs of the Monitor.*

It is a matter of thankfulness to the publisher, that, under many disadvantages, and in the face of the popular current of the age, divine Providence has continued this work in existence for so long a period. Periodical works and newspapers, of a professedly religious character, which are nevertheless in many respects unfriendly to Reformation principles, have become so numerous, and many of them, owing to an extensive patronage, are afforded at so cheap a rate, and are so constantly urged upon the people by extraordinary exertions, that the field for circulating the Monitor is extremely limited. Yet, in reference to it, we are enabled in some degree to adopt the language of the apostle, "Having therefore obtained help of God, we continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great."

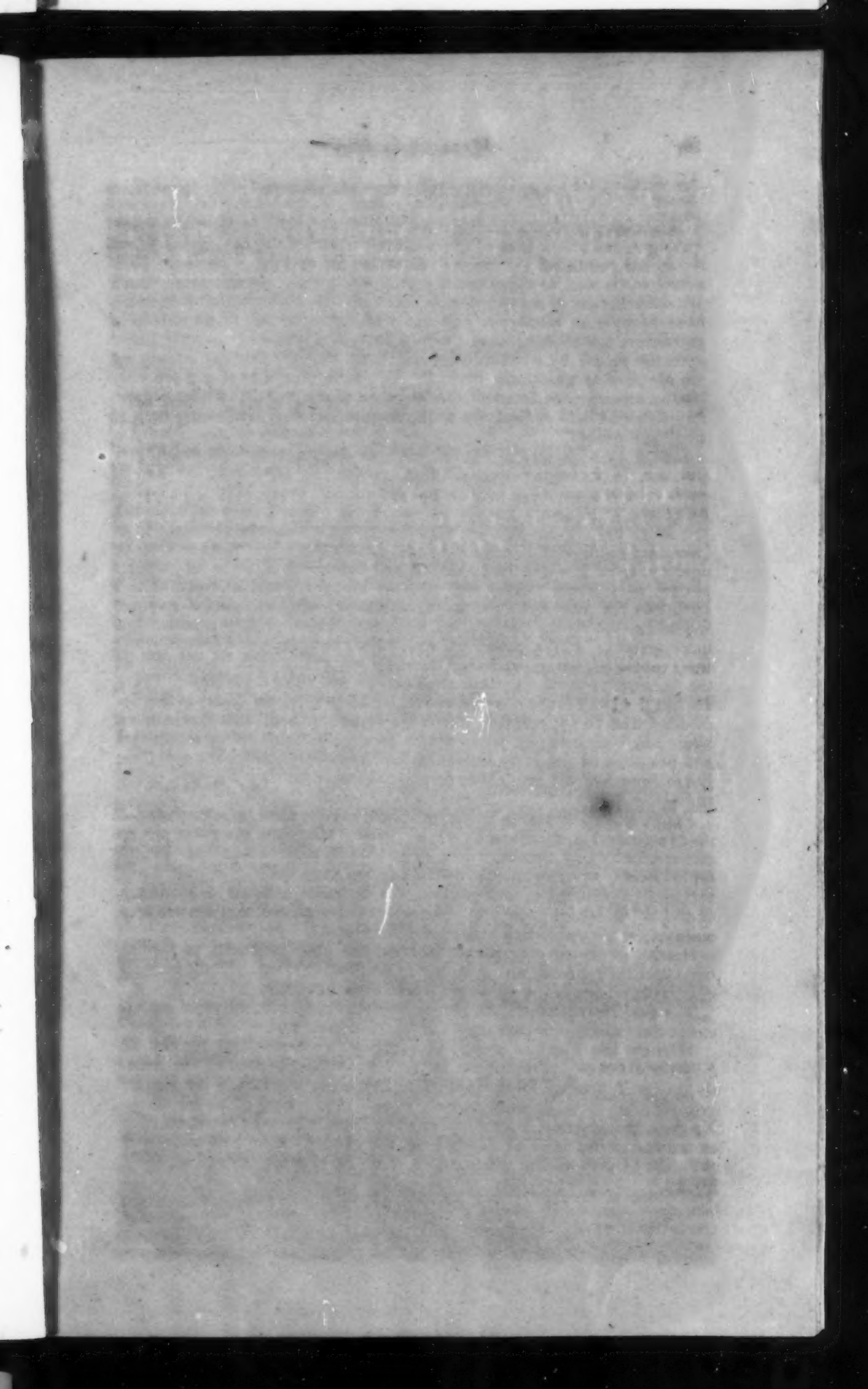
Owing to a variety of causes, such as deaths, removals, inability to pay, and in some instances indifference, there is always at the end of each volume a number of discontinuances; and these must be supplied by others, or the work cannot be supported. Some suppose the work too dear; but its comparatively limited circulation, and the amount of losses are such, that it cannot be maintained for a less price. Others, again, suppose it might be improved, and because it is not in all respects perfect, they stand aloof. But such as look for a perfect work of this kind, look for what has never been, and never will be. And if any one should be slow to believe this, let him make the attempt to produce one more perfect. Every possible exertion has been made, and frequently at the expense of losing patronage, to maintain the peculiar principles of the Secession church; and the same course will still be pursued. There are but few who make any pretension to the general principles of the Secession, who do not admit in words the importance of those principles, while many such are as far removed from the genuine spirit, sentiments and practices of the early Seceders, as the modern Lutherans are from the principles of the intrepid Reformer whose name they are still proud to bear.

Respecting controversial articles: these cannot always be excluded—nor would such a course be at all desirable. Many of the great principles maintained by Seceders may be viewed in different aspects by different minds, who are equally devoted to the same cause. A manly and temperate discussion of difficult points is desirable, and has a tendency to add to the reader's stock of knowledge, although different writers may entertain views exhibiting shades of difference.

It is hoped our correspondents will continue their exertions to furnish our pages with a sufficient quantity of original matter. Without their aid, the exertions of the publisher would avail but little.

The *twelfth* volume will be commenced with a number of extra copies, under the expectation that they will be subscribed for.

Whether the Monitor is still to continue, as heretofore, to pay its monthly visits to the scattered families and congregations of the Associate church, bearing some word of instruction or comfort to the sincere inquirer after truth, depends entirely upon the exertions of its friends.—To them the question is submitted, and to them it belongs to return such an answer as the cause of Zion's king, the good of their own souls, and the souls of such as are entrusted to their care, may demand at their hands.



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☞ The Reasons of Protest against the deed of Synod, acknowledging the Original Seceders to be in communion with us, and the Answers to those Reasons, by a Committee of Synod, of which 1000 copies were published, have been all sold. This notice is given for the information of such as have ordered copies, which have not been forwarded to them.

AGENTS.

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 January 1, 1835.

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